



T. Jones, Pryor Mountains

Custer Gallatin Forest Plan Revision

To sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Understanding Designated Areas – Definitions

By definition a designated area is defined as an area or feature identified and managed to maintain its unique special character or purpose.

The Proposed Action outlines several types of designated areas outlined by definition here. For more information refer to Chapters 2 and 3 under designated areas for specifics. This quick reference is meant only to provide definitions of designated areas.

Wilderness

Defined as an area of land designated by Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System that was established in the Wilderness Act of 1964 (16 United States Code 1131–1136).

Recommended Wilderness

is defined as an area that has been determined to meet the criteria to be designated as wilderness and is proposed in this land management plan by the Forest Supervisor to be recommended to Congress for inclusion into the National Wilderness Preservation System. The lands in this category have potential to become designated. The Forest Service only recommends, Congress and ultimately the president must establish legislation to officially designate a wilderness area.

Wilderness Study Area (WSA)

The Custer Gallatin has one Wilderness Study Area, the 155,000-acre Hyalite-Porcupine-Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study Area, located in the core of the Gallatin range running north to Hyalite Canyon and south to the Yellowstone National Park boundary. The Hyalite-Porcupine-Buffalo Horn Wilderness Study area is specifically designated under the Montana Wilderness Study Act of 1977 to maintain the presently existing wilderness character and potential for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Wilderness: *where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.*

Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility

is a step in the process to evaluate rivers that may qualify as part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, which only Congress can designate. A river that is found Eligible is managed to maintain a rivers wild, scenic or recreational character including a free-flowing status and their outstanding remarkable value for which they have been identified.



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Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRA)

The 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule) established prohibitions and permissions on road construction, road reconstruction, and timber harvesting on 58.5 million acres of National Forest lands across the United States. This includes approximately 847,420 acres of inventoried roadless areas on the Custer Gallatin National Forest. The Forest Plan Revision will not remove or change the boundaries of these Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRA), although other recommended designations such as Recommended Wilderness, may overlay an IRA.

The intent of the Roadless Rule is to provide lasting protection for inventoried roadless areas within the national Forest System in the context of multiple-use management. Specifically, the Roadless Rule prohibits activities that have the greatest likelihood of altering and fragmenting landscapes, resulting in immediate, long-term loss of roadless area values and characteristics, eliminates permanent road construction and reconstruction, thereby reducing fiscal demands and responsibilities, and reduces controversy over management of Roadless Areas

Backcountry Areas

A backcountry area is a Forest Plan allocation, similar to a management area. The areas have low levels of existing development. Proposed management direction may vary in each backcountry area. For instance, whether motorized or mechanized recreation is a suitable use.

Recreation Emphasis Area

A recreation emphasis area is another Forest Plan allocation, similar to a management area. These areas typically offer a variety of quality recreation opportunities, including motorized and nonmotorized uses. The recreation opportunities are accessible to a wide range of users, in several seasons, and typically offer challenges to a wide range of skills. The areas may be regional, national, or international destinations, or may be close to higher population centers. Recreation Emphasis Areas close to population centers may offer opportunities for trail connections to communities or may have a high density of human activities and associated structures. There may be roads, utilities, and trails as well as signs of past and ongoing activities of managed forest vegetation. Opportunities for solitude and a primitive experience may be limited near roads or trails due to frequent contact with other users.

Research Natural Areas (RNA) & Special Areas (SIA)

Research Natural Areas are part of a national network of ecological areas designated in perpetuity for research, education, and/or to maintain biological diversity of National Forest lands. They serve as baseline areas for non-manipulative research, observation, and study. The Custer Gallatin National Forest has ten existing Research Natural Areas, which total approximately 29,650 acres across the Forest.

Special Interest Areas are additional designated areas specifically for research and education of botanical and paleontological resources. The Custer Gallatin has two special areas, which total 3,773 acres. Emphasis is on unique values.

